



Iranian
political prisoner

Zia Nabavi

Born December 21, 1983 in Qaemshahr, Iran

Zia Nabavi, a student of chemical engineering, is a member of the Council to Defend the Right to Education, a body set up in 2009 by students barred from studying because of their civic and political activism. Zia was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in January 2010.

Zia was arrested on June 14, 2009, after attending a mass protest against the fraudulent June 2009 presidential election. Among others arrested at the same time was his cousin Atefeh Nabavi, herself now sentenced to four years in prison for attending the demonstration.

Zia had previously been arrested while studying at Mazandaran University, and was later banned from resuming his studies and from obtaining his Master's degree.

Following his recent arrest in June 2009, Zia was interrogated under extreme duress. Initially held in Evin prison, Zia was sentenced in January 2010 to 15 years' in prison by Branch 26 of the Revolutionary Court: three years for "gathering and conspiring against national security"; one year for "anti-state propaganda"; one year for "disturbing public order"; as well as 10 years for "links to and cooperating with the Mujahideen-e Khalq" to be served at Izeh prison in Khuzestan province, 1,000 km from his home in northern Iran. He was also sentenced to 74 lashes for "creating unease in the public mind."

Zia denies all the charges and appealed against the verdict. The appeals court reduced his sentence to 10 from 15 years. In October 2010, Zia was moved to Karoon prison in Khuzestan province in southwestern Iran. He was severely beaten and held in solitary confinement for 48 hours upon arriving in Karoon prison.

On March 11, 2011, human rights groups reported that Zia was transferred to an intelligence agency prison where he was put in solitary confinement. Zia's father, Seyed Ali Akbar Nabavi, has also been summoned and interrogated because of his son's activities.